

Ithaca Police Benevolent Association, Inc.

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MEDIA RELEASE

On October 11, 2012 Ithaca Police Officer Tony Augustine was intentionally shot in the chest by a fleeing suspect, Jamel Booker. At that time Officer Augustine had been pursuing Booker in a stolen vehicle, and then ultimately on foot. Jamel Booker intentionally shot Officer Augustine in the chest from approximately 10 feet away with a .38 caliber revolver. This cowardly attack by Booker nearly took Officer Augustine's life that night. That act continues to have a daily effect on Tony.

Jamel Booker was captured, charged, and stood trial here in Tompkins County for 8 charges related to that incident. On April 22nd, a jury found Jamel Booker guilty on all but one of the charges for which he was arrested. The Jury failed to find him guilty of attempted murder of a POLICE OFFICER.

I am deeply disturbed, very confused, and unfortunately not at all surprised by this verdict. It baffles my mind that given all of the evidence presented to the jury, including Jamel Booker's own confession the jury was unable to find him guilty of attempted murder of a Police Officer. As if there was some other intended outcome from shooting a police officer in the chest with a .38 caliber hollow point bullet from 10 feet away.

This is a travesty. The cowardly acts of Jamel Booker on October 11, 2012 were not only an attack on Ithaca Police Officer Tony Augustine, but an attack on our society as well. Each and every day the Ithaca Police Department responds to many calls from citizens for help. This is the basis of what we as Police Officers do every single day. We respond to help others at their time of need. We respond when people are unable to resolve their situation on their own. We as Police officers work and respond to help calls from our community 24 hours a day 365 days a year. We sacrifice time with our own families to be able to help keep our residents and our community safe.

Our entire community should be outraged over the actions of Jamel Booker, and the lack of a guilty verdict for attempted murder. Jamel Booker attacked a Police Officer. Booker knew exactly what he was doing, and he knew without question that Officer Augustine was a Police Officer. He knew this for several obvious reasons. He knew this because he saw the flashing emergency lights and heard the accompanying sirens behind him as he fled in the vehicle that he had just stolen. He knew Officer Augustine was a Police Officer because he saw the Police vehicle with the emergency equipment active as he exited the stolen car and fled on foot. He knew Officer Augustine was a Police Officer because he heard his verbal commands to stop. Booker knew Officer Augustine was a Police Officer because he saw him wearing his Police Uniform with badge plainly displayed as he drew the illegal revolver pointed it at Officer Augustine's chest, and pulled the trigger.

Our community holds us as Police Officers to the highest standard, as they should. We as Police Officers owe that to our community. In return for that our community should hold those that attack us while we protect them to the highest level of accountability. Please join us in encouraging the Tompkins County District Attorney's Office to re-try Jamel Booker for attempting to intentionally kill Officer Augustine.

The Ithaca PBA feels that the evidence that Jamel Booker intentionally tried to kill Officer Augustine is clear, convincing, and substantial.

Please join me, the Ithaca Police Benevolent Association, and Tony Augustine in our pursuit to have Jamel Booker Re-tried by contacting the Tompkins County District Attorney's Office at gwilkinson@tompkins-co.org , or via telephone at (607) 274-5461.

We, the Ithaca Police PBA, believe in the criminal justice system. We remain hopeful that Jamel Booker will be sentenced appropriately, and that his sentence will reflect the seriousness of the 7 charges for which he was convicted.

Sincerely,
John Joly
Ithaca PBA President